

Cardwell School

Inspection report for early years provision

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| Unique Reference Number | EY338084 |
| Inspection date | 08 November 2007 |
| Inspector | Gillian Cubitt |
| Setting Address | 118 Frances Street, Woolwich, London, SE18 5LP |
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| Registered person | Cardwell School |
| Type of inspection | Childcare |
| Type of care | Full day care, Out of School care, Crèche |

ABOUT THIS INSPECTION

The purpose of this inspection is to assure government, parents and the public of the quality of childcare and, if applicable, of nursery education. The inspection was carried out under Part XA Children Act 1989 as introduced by the Care Standards Act 2000 and, where nursery education is provided, under Schedule 26 of the School Standards and Framework Act 1998.

This report details the main strengths and any areas for improvement identified during the inspection. The judgements included in the report are made in relation to the outcomes for children set out in the Children Act 2004; the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding; and, where nursery education is provided, the *Curriculum guidance for the foundation stage*.

The report includes information on any complaints about the childcare provision which Ofsted has received since the last inspection or registration or 1 April 2004 whichever is the later.

The key inspection judgements and what they mean

Outstanding: this aspect of the provision is of exceptionally high quality

Good: this aspect of the provision is strong

Satisfactory: this aspect of the provision is sound

Inadequate: this aspect of the provision is not good enough

For more information about early years inspections, please see the booklet *Are you ready for your inspection?* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

The quality and standards of the care are good. The registered person meets the National Standards for under 8s day care and childminding.

WHAT SORT OF SETTING IS IT?

Cardwell Children's Centre was registered in 2007. It operates from a purpose built building attached to Cardwell Primary school in Woolwich, London, SE18. The Centre is registered to care for up to 22 children aged from six months to three years. It opens every day from 08:00 until 18:00 and operates for 48 weeks of the year, closing for some school holidays.

Children attend for a variety of sessions each week. The Centre consists of a baby room, toddler room and a crèche. There are two kitchens, one for use by staff and a dedicated kitchen for the preparation of children's meals. There are enclosed outside play areas for all age ranges.

A maximum of eight children may attend the crèche at any one time. The crèche offers childcare provision for parents/carers attending training workshops within the centre.

The nursery operates from two group rooms. There are currently 25 children aged from two to under five years on roll. The Children's Centre also offers an out of school facility for a maximum of 12 children up to the age of eight years, although at the time of the inspection, this was not operational. The Centre supports children with learning difficulties and disabilities and also supports children who speak English as an additional language.

There are 13 members of staff all of whom hold a relevant childcare qualification.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF THE PROVISION

Helping children to be healthy

The provision is good.

The standards of hygiene in the Centre are very high. All visitors must remove their shoes before entering and are invited to clean their hands from the antibacterial gel dispenser situated by the entrance door. This informs visitors that hygiene for babies and toddlers is paramount. Good hygiene practice is also reinforced by practitioners who are rigorous in their duties to prevent any risk of cross-contamination. Cleaning occurs throughout the day plus evening cleaners ensure that the rooms are bright, fresh and clean for the following morning. Positive hygiene habits are learnt by the children from an early age. The low, child-height, sink encourages toddlers to wash their hands when they are dirty or sticky, especially after eating yoghurt. Good hygiene procedures are followed, which are clearly displayed, when changing nappies. For example, disposable gloves and aprons are worn, mats are cleaned with anti-bacterial spray and practitioners wash their hands afterwards. An effective sick child policy is in place which protects children from illness and the spread of infection.

Practitioners are particularly sensitive to children with health and dietary needs and work closely with parents to ensure their needs are well met. All meals are freshly prepared each day in the school kitchen, following children's individual dietary needs. This is further checked, in the room, before food is given to the children. Mealtime is a relaxed sociable experience where children sit and chat happily to each other and practitioners. Fresh drinking water is offered at snack and meal times and children have their named cups with water on the side should they feel thirsty during the day.

Children benefit from daily exercise as they are free to access the outdoor play area where they run around and play with balls and climb in tents. They know to wrap up warm in winter and the retractable awning protects children and babies from the sun in summer and allows them to play outside when it is raining. This gives children daily opportunities to breathe fresh air whilst playing which supports their good health and developing bodies.

Protecting children from harm or neglect and helping them stay safe

The provision is good.

Children play in a safe and stimulating environment. The building is purpose built for toddlers and babies, therefore, systems and equipment installed are focused on children's safety and wellbeing. For example, there is a security entry system and all parents and visitors sign on arrival and when leaving the premises so that practitioners are aware of who is in the building. Sinks, toilets and baby changing facilities are well designed and safe for children and practitioners. The two rooms are bright and colourful with wall displays of children's art work, posters and friezes which give them a sense of belonging within the setting. The children also enjoy the freedom of using the outside play areas which are well designed, fully enclosed with low level resources which children access easily. Here, babies and toddlers can also experiment with their emerging walking skills in safety because the soft, rubber ground cover cushions the impact of when they lose balance.

All areas of the building are safe and practitioners visually check the rooms each day, although a formal written risk assessment is not yet established. This impacts on children's safety especially

if practitioners do not regularly reflect on their accident records to improve safety within the setting. Fire drills are a frequent occurrence, in line with the school schedule, which ensures children become accustomed to procedures in the event of an emergency evacuation.

Children's welfare is safeguarded as practitioners are clear about their role and responsibilities relating to keeping children safe from harm and neglect. They understand that their first responsibility lies with the child; they are aware of the procedures to follow and who to contact in the event of a concern.

Helping children achieve well and enjoy what they do

The provision is good.

Children are happy, secure and settled and become engrossed in the activities that enable them to acquire new knowledge and skills. There is a good balance of child-initiated and adult-led activities which creates a relaxed, purposeful and stimulating environment for the children. Practitioners sit and interact with children throughout the day which encourages them to communicate and feel secure. Babies receive comforting hugs and soothing songs which promotes bonding. The constant interaction helps practitioners to interpret babies' pre-verbal sounds so their needs are met. Toddlers enjoy stories which the practitioners share with the children, introducing them to a range of songs and rhymes, enabling them to explore and experiment with sound. Most children enjoy the story of the Bear Hunt and engage in role play to find the bear. Their vocabulary is enriched as they repeat descriptive words such as, 'swishy, swashy, splish and splash' which engages their imaginations and desire to communicate. A key worker system is in place, which makes it easier for practitioners to keep a track of a particular child's development and relate any information to parents. Practitioners have a general knowledge of how children develop and learn and include this in their planning although at times, planned activities are not always appropriate for the ages of individual children. For example, toddlers enjoy painting and making marks with crayons, cornflour and sand but they do not comprehend the significance of taking part in making Diwali cards which are pre-made. However, dressing up in attractive saris, feeling the textures of the different materials and seeing practitioners in cultural costumes stimulate and engage the children well.

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Helping children make a positive contribution

The provision is good.

Children and parents are warmly greeted on arrival, making them feel welcome. All children are treated with equal concern, helping them to settle and join in with the activities. Practitioners respect parents' wishes as regards to any individual needs, helping to promote the children's self-esteem. Children with learning difficulties are appropriately supported. Practitioners endeavour to work together with parents and other professionals where necessary to ensure that children receive the input they need. Children play with a variety of toys and materials that reflect the wider world and their own community which is the beginning of increasing their awareness of diversity.

Children's emotional wellbeing is promoted by practitioners effectively putting behaviour management policies into practice. They are attentive and caring towards the children, taking

account of children's individual needs and circumstances with the related behaviours that accompany these. A few children find it hard to share and some do not wish to join in. By gentle encouragement, they begin to learn how to play with others and share their toys.

Partnership with the parents is good and contributes towards children's well-being. Parents are welcomed into the setting and practitioners respect and value their suggestions and input. During the settling-in period, the key worker takes the opportunity to get to know the child and informs the parents about all aspects of the provision. The daily contact sheet also keeps parents fully informed about their children's day which promotes continuity of care.

Organisation

The organisation is good.

Children are secure and comfortable in a setting which is well organised by an enthusiastic team who are qualified and vetted to care for children. Practitioners work closely together to create a child-focused environment and who have a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

Organisation of the rooms is good with babies having their own play space and separate room for sleeping. Adult:child ratios are high and the key worker system ensures that children receive good support and constant attention. Daily registration systems are rigorous with parents signing in and out as well as practitioners maintaining separate registers of children's attendance.

Apart from the formal recording of risk assessments, all required policies are well written and records pertaining to the smooth daily organisation are in place. Procedures for induction training and meetings are evident, plus opportunities are being arranged for practitioners to update their knowledge and skills with further training.

The provision meets the needs of the range of the children for whom it provides.

Improvements since the last inspection

Not applicable

Complaints since the last inspection

Since registration there have been no complaints made to Ofsted that required the provider or Ofsted to take any action in order to meet the National Standards.

The provider is required to keep a record of complaints made by parents, which they can see on request. The complaints record may contain complaints other than those made to Ofsted.

THE QUALITY AND STANDARDS OF THE CARE

On the basis of the evidence collected on this inspection:

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WHAT MUST BE DONE TO SECURE FUTURE IMPROVEMENT?

The quality and standards of the care

To improve the quality and standards of care further the registered person should take account of the following recommendation(s):

- continue to develop the skills of all staff to enable them to organise activities effectively, using their observations on children to inform planning
- implement regular written risk assessments of the children's rooms, linking these to the records of accidents

Any complaints about the inspection or the report should be made following the procedures set out in the leaflet *Complaints about Ofsted Early Years: concerns or complaints about Ofsted's role in regulating and inspecting childcare and early education (HMI ref no 2599)* which is available from Ofsted's website: www.ofsted.gov.uk